the banker on whom it is drawn otherwise than to the banker to whom it is crossed or his agent for collection. These provisions further provide that if a banker credits the proceeds of a crossed cheque to someone other than the payee he would in case the title to a cheque proves defective incur liability to the true owner of the cheque by reason only of having received such payment.

Impact of liberalisation on gold prices and its smuggling

563. SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU:
DR. ABRAR AHMED:

SHRIMATI KAMLA SINHA:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) what were the prices of gold before and after liberalisation of gold import policy and how these compare with the international price of gold;

(b) what is the amount of gold smuggled into India during the period six months prior to liberalisation of gold import policy;

(c) what is the amount of Gold smuggled into India since liberalisation of gold import policy and what is the percentage of decline in the smuggling as result thereof;

(d) what is the number of persons apprehended for smuggling of gold be the Enforcement Authorities since May, 1992 indicating comparative figures for each quarter during 1991; and

(e) what steps are contemplated to check the smuggling of gold?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RAMESHWAR THAKUR): (a) Average monthly price of primary gold in the Bombay and London markets for each of the months of 1992 (from January to June) are given in the table below:—

Average monthly price of gold

(In Rs. per 10 grams)

1992	Bombay Market	London Market
January	4910	2995
February	4708	2987
March	4245	2878
April	4465	2830
May	4173	2821
June	4109	2847

(b) and (c) Since smuggling is a clandestine activity, it is not possible to quantify the amount of gold smuggled into India during the period of 6 months prior to liberalisation of the gold import policy and thereafter. However, the Customs authorities have seized approximately 1684 kgs. of gold during the 6 months period from September, 1991 to Feb. 1992 and seized 832 kgs. of gold approximately during the period from March to June, 1992.

(d) The number of persons arrested for being involved in the smuggling of gold by various enforcement agencies in

May, 1992 and during each quarter of 1991 are given in the table below:—

	No. of persons arrested
January to March, 1991	349
April to June, 1991	300
July to September, 1991	201
October to December, 1991	159
May, 1992	19
June, 1992	(Figures are being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House).

(e) The Customs authorities remain alert against smuggling including that of gold. Sophisticated equipment such as X-ray baggage machines and metal detectors are being increasingly utilised. The anti-smuggling drive has been intensified and close coordination is being maintained between all the agencies concerned with the detection and prevention of smuggling.

Reserve Bank of India guidelines for non-banking financial companies

564. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Reserve Bank of India has recently, announced fresh guidelines for non-banking financial companies;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof;

(c) whether the non-banking financial companies would be benefited as a result thereof; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI DALBIR SINGH): (a) and (b) Reserve Bank of India (RBI) have reported that they have recently amended their directions issued to non-banking financial companies. The important amendments are as under:—

(i) The non-banking financial companies can now pay interest or compound interest at monthly rates.

(ii) Deposits can now be accepted by non-banking financial companies in joint names not exceeding three with clauses like "Either or survivor" "Anyone or Survivor" etc.

(iii) Interest at a rate not exceeding 11 percent per annum can be paid if deposits are withdrawn prematurely after 12 months but before 24 months.

(iv) If a company is engaged both depositor, the deposit can be repaid prematurely to the surviving depositor his legal heir with interest at the contracted rate.

(v) If a company is engaged both in hire purchase finance and equipment leasing activities, its business in both these activities will be taken together in determining its classification.

(c) and (d) RBI have reported that the measures relating to deposits provide greater flexibility for depositors and thereby facilitate deposit mobilisation.